

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
[651] money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
[436] on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
[721] zation, and at their system of training their young men.

[182] In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
184 In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Para-
mount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity,
under several missions, never achieved, especially in educa-
tion, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved
among the Ngoni in the North.

178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
wealth had been associated with political power, and the
[661] Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans
had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils
from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered
villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
[871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn
money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command
financial resources which were not available to the traditional
[464] leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment
which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the
1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

178 It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
184 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
561 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
[648] mount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they
called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here
to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the genera-
tion of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

583 rights at all. The payment of bridewealth had in the past enabled
586 affinally related groups of kin to 'foresee the behaviour of one another
198 in given situations since the payments evoke the behaviour'¹⁰ but
now the given situations were unlikely to occur. We may say then
in this second phase poverty and uncertainty about the overall
system of social relationships within which marriages would continue
caused marriage payments to be low and, in some instances, non-
existent.

• [436] The gradual increase in power of the Native Authority and the
contemporaneous increased participation in the money economy
have brought about further changes in the third phase, beginning
round about 1930. In recent years the value of the legalization
payment has increased and seems likely to increase further. This
change is demonstrated in Table VII, although we must recall that
[191] the time classification in this table is by year of marriage, not year
of payment. Similar increases have been noted among other
Eastern Province tribes, notwithstanding cultural differences between
them and the Ngoni. This increase has been possible because of the
[465] rise in wages and prices, but we cannot regard this as the sole cause.
[435] This simple hypothesis is ruled out by the simultaneous fall in
bridewealth, as suggested by Table VI. While wages have risen, the
rights associated with bridewealth have declined in importance and
those associated with the legalization payment have remained
significant. A high payment gives each particular marriage the
mark of stability, yet at the same time the process which enables a
young man to offer as much as £10 for his bride without appealing
to his kinsmen for help has also made his expectation of life-long
marriage with her less than it would have been thirty years ago,
when he would have offered only 6s. Men earn money in Southern
Rhodesia and the Copperbelt. They move freely between urban
and rural environments, using the money to make large marriage
payments in the villages. They stand on their own, do not call
[641] on their senior agnates for help, marry where they will, and settle
with that headman whose village most attracts them or is most
conveniently situated for siting a new shop. Yet if in this way
they can free themselves from prescribed affiliation to a kin group,
so can their children do the same. The former structural basis for
[581] stable marriage, the invariable affiliation of children to their agnatic
[615] group, has gone. There is as yet no system of law and morals, nor
[183] sufficient interest in inheritable property, to provide an alternative
means of stabilizing marriage. As among the Ila, high marriage
payments accompany frequent divorce.

121 The hypothesis that increased frequency of divorce among the
171 Ngoni is due mainly to the breakdown of their agnatic system may
586 be supported by comparison with the Zulu and other Natal tribes.
Here the old system, characterized by strong agnatic affiliation and

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 172.